

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1376

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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EO 11652GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UR

SUBJ: OFFICIAL CALL ON LENINGRAD PARTY FIRST SECRETARY ROMANOV

BEGIN SUMMARY:

1. CONSUL GENERAL NEUBERT PAID OFFICIAL CALL JULY 3 ON G.V. ROMANOV, FIRST SECRETARY OF LENINGRAD OBLAST PARTY ORGANIZATION (AND CANDIDATE MEMBER OF THE POLITURO). MEETING, HELD AT SMOLNYY PARTY HEADQUARTERS, WAS FIRST FORMAL CALL, ALTHOUGH CONSUL GENERAL AND ROMANOV HAVE MET AND TALKED PREVIOUSLY AT SOCIAL FUNCTIONS. ALSO PRESENT DURING CALL WERE DPO MATTHEWS; G.I. POPOV, THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN LENINGRAD; AND N.YA. SUSLOV, CHIEF OF THE FOREIGN RELATIONS SECTION OF THE PARTY OBKOM. END SUMMARY.

2. THE ONE-HOUR MEETING CONSISTED MOSTLY OF A GENERAL EXCHANGE ON LENINGRAD AND THE CONSULATE GENERAL'S ROLE IN IMPROVING U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS AND CONTACTS. ROMANOV WAS VERY FIT AND, AS USUAL, AN INTERESTING CONVERSATIONALIST. FOLLOWING ARE A FEW OF HIS PARTICULAR POINTS.

3. THE CONSUL GENERAL ASKED ROMANOV HOW HE DIVIDED HIS EFFORTS BETWEEN HIS LENINGRAD RESPONSIBILITIES AS
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FIRST SECRETARY AND HIS CENTRAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS

CANDIDATE MEMBER OF THE POLITBURO. ROMANOV REPLIED THAT HE WAS ALMOST ENTIRELY CONCERNED WITH HIS LENINGRAD HAT--UNDERSTANDABLE IN VIEW OF THE AREA'S SIZE AND INDUSTRIAL/AGRICULTURAL ENDEAVORS. HE IS THE SPOKESMAN FOR LENINGRAD MATTERS WHEN CENTRAL DECISIONS ARE REQUIRED AND, ROMANOV SAID, HE HAS THE FULL SUPPORT AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF HIS POLITBURO COLLEAGUES "AND BREZHNEV PERSONALLY" IN OBTAINING NECESSARY DECISIONS AND FUNDS. ROMANOV ADDED THAT HE ALSO NATURALLY PARTICIPATED IN POLITBURO DISCUSSIONS ON COUNTRY-WIDE ISSUES AND THAT HIS CONSIDERED VIEWS ON VARIED SUBJECTS WERE EQUALLY WELL RECEIVED.

4. ROMANOV NOTED THAT LENINGRAD INNOVATIONS IN INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE HAD RECEIVED CENTRAL APPROVAL AND COUNTRY-WIDE ADOPTION, EG THE PRODUCTIONS ASSOCIATION CONCEPT, WORKERS' EDUCATION AND TRAINING, AND MORE INTENSIVE CULTIVATION OF NON-BLACK EARTH AREAS. LENINGRAD WAS EXCEEDING ITS 9TH FIVE YEAR PLAN GOALS AND PRODUCTIVITY WAS CONTINUALLY INCREASING.

5. ROMANOV MADE SEVERAL REDERENCES TO THE DELEGATION OF U.S. SENATORS CURRENTLY VISITING LENINGRAD, INQUIRING AS TO THEIR SATISFACTION WITH THE VISIT. HE APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN BRIEFED ON THEIR MEETING WITH BREZHNEV IN MOSCOW SINCE HE MADE A POINT OF NOTING THAT THE SENATORS COULD BE CERTAIN THAT BREZHNEV ALWAYS SPEAKS OPENLY AND SINCERELY AND "DOES NOT PLAY GAMES" DURING SUCH MEETINGS. THE SENATORS, HE SAID, COULD BE CONFIDENT THAT THEY RECEIVED A TRUE EXPRESSION OF SOVIET POSITIONS ON THE QUESTIONS WHICH WERE DISCUSSED. ROMANOV NOTED IN THIS CONTEXT THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER WOULD SOON BE MEETING AGAIN WITH GROMYKO AND HE OBSERVED THAT BOTH COUNTRIES COULD TAKE SATISFACTION IN THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF RECENT YEARS. THERE WERE SOME PROBLEMS, BUT THE PROGRAM OF PEACE HAD SUCCEEDED IN TURNING FROM COLD WAR TO DETENTE-- A PROCESS IN WHICH IMPROVED U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS WERE ESSENTIAL TO WORLD PEACE.

6. ROMANOV SOLICITOUSLY INQUIRED WHETHER THE CONSUL
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GENERAL HAD ANY PROBLEMS AND HOW HE FOUND LENINGRAD AND ITS PEOPLE. THE CONSUL GENERAL EXPRESSED GRATITUDE TO ROMANOV AND THE CITY/OBLAST OFFICIALS FOR THEIR COOPERATION IN OBTAINING ATTRACTIVE OFFICE AND RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES AND NOTED THAT CONTACTS WERE BOTH WIDE AND FRIENDLY. CONSUL GENERAL EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT TRAVEL CONTROLS COULD BE EASED TO OUR MUTUAL ADVANTAGE AND CONVENIENCE. ROMANOV HAD LITTLE TO SAY ON THIS ISSUE OTHER THAN TO REFER TO

SIMILAR RESTRICTIONS FOR SOVIET DIPLOMATS IN THE US AND TO NOTE THAT SUCH QUESTIONS COULD BE RESOLVED ONLY IN BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON. (COMMENT: OTHER WESTER CONSULS GENERAL HAVE ALSO RAISED TRAVEL CONTROLS IN THEIR PROTOCOL CALLS ON ROMANOV AND RECEIVED SIMILAR REJOINDER). ROMANOV NOTED THAT THERE WERE STILL SOME SHORTCOMINGS IN THE SOVIET ORGANIZATION IN LENINGRAD WHICH PROVIDES SERVICES TO THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY, BUT IT WAS A RATHER NEW OPERATION AND STILL LEARNING; IMPROVEMENTS COULD BE EXPECTED.

7. COMMENT: MEETING WENT WELL AND WE WILL BE TAKING THIS AS POINT OF DEPARTURE TO REQUEST CALLS ON OTHER OBKOM AND GORKOM SECRETARIES AND SECTION HEADS. AS A FOOTNOTE, ROMANOV OPENED DISCUSSION BY DISPLAYING INVITATION WHICH HE HAD RECEIVED TO CONSUL GENERAL'S 4TH OF JULY RECEPTION. HE THANKED CONSUL GENERAL FOR INVITATION, BUT SAID HE WAS ALREADY COMMITTED AT THAT TIME BECAUSE OF A DELEGATION ARRIVING IN LENINGRAD. HE EXPRESSED HIS BEST WISHES ON OCCASION OF US INDEPENDENCE DAY. CONGEN EXPECTS THAT RANKING PARTY OFFICIAL PRESENT AT RECEPTION WILL BE B.I. ARISTOV, FIRST SECRETARY OF LENINGRAD CITY PARTY ORGANIZATION, WHO HAS BEEN ATTENDING FUNCTIONS HELD FOR THE DELEGATION OF US SENATORS.
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